

MIDDRIDGE HISTORY SOCIETY

Talks for 2023/2024

12th October 2023

Alastair Fraser: Hadrian's Wall: a journey through time, places and imagination

The talk covers the logistics of walking the Wall and examines the different remains to be seen and how they relate to the construction and history of the Wall.

9th November

Dr John Banham: The Backhouses of Darlington – Quaker Bankers

John Banham, who is the Secretary of Durham County Local History Society, will talk about Backhouses' Bank of Darlington 1774-1836. The bank's Quaker partners were important figures in financing the Stockton & Darlington Railway. Dr Banham will explain how the bank was developed from an eighteenth century Darlington linen business expanding in the early nineteenth century to have branches throughout the North East. Backhouses' Bank merged with Barclays in 1896.

14th December 2023

Dr Richard Pears: David Stephenson (1757-1819) architect and town planner

Stephenson designed All Saints Church in Newcastle, a superb Georgian building. He also designed Mosley and Dean Streets in Newcastle, and worked as the Duke of Northumberland's architect at North Shields, Alnwick and Prudhoe Castles. He was one of the founders of the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society and built a country house for himself at Waldrige Hall, near Chester-le-Street.

11th January 2024

Niall Hammond: The Stockton & Darlington Railway; the railway that got the world on track 1825-2025.

The opening of the S&DR in 1825 ushered in a transport and social revolution which changed the world. The talk will discuss how and why the S&DR was built, its influence and plans for the bicentenary in 2025.

8th February 2024

Dr Jonathan Bush: Ten facts you probably didn't know about Durham University's history

Established by an Act of Parliament in 1832, Durham University holds the distinction of being the third oldest university in England. It has a rich and often surprising history, from its close connection to the Church of England in its early days to its present-day incarnation as a globally recognised organisation. This talk, accompanied by images from its archive collection, will explore ten facts about the University's story that you (probably) weren't aware of, and trace the evolution of a unique institution.

14th March 2024

Chris Lloyd: Secret Darlington

Some secrets about Darlington from Chris' new book, *Secret Darlington*, which has just been published: the mill town, the black sheep of the Pease and Backhouse families, the largest vat of brandy in the world, the art of lion taming, and the world champion dart spitter...